

## One Stone Loose Upon the Footpath

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/64337047) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/64337047>.

Rating:	<a href="#">Teen And Up Audiences</a>
Archive Warning:	<a href="#">Major Character Death</a>
Category:	<a href="#">Gen</a>
Fandom:	<a href="#">Dream SMP</a>
Relationships:	<a href="#">Wilbur Soot &amp; Technoblade &amp; TommyInnit &amp; Phil Watson   Philza, Toby Smith   Tubbo &amp; TommyInnit, Ranboo &amp; Toby Smith   Tubbo</a>
Characters:	<a href="#">TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF), Wilbur Soot, Phil Watson   Philza, Technoblade (Video Blogging RPF), Toby Smith   Tubbo, Ranboo (Video Blogging RPF), Jschlatt (Video Blogging RPF), Niki   Nihachu, Clay   Dream (Video Blogging RPF), Michael the Piglin (Dream SMP), Dream SMP Ensemble</a> <a href="#">Alternate Universe - Superheroes/Superpowers, temporary major character death, Villian SBI, Hero Dream, antagonist dream, Implied/Referenced Child Abuse, Mind Control, Found Family, Zombies, I stress the mcd tag is for temporary main character death!, One step foward had it too and no one died... permanently</a>
Additional Tags:	<a href="#">Alternate Universe - Superheroes/Superpowers, temporary major character death, Villian SBI, Hero Dream, antagonist dream, Implied/Referenced Child Abuse, Mind Control, Found Family, Zombies, I stress the mcd tag is for temporary main character death!, One step foward had it too and no one died... permanently</a>
Language:	English
Series:	<a href="#">Part 9 of Stepping Stones</a>
Stats:	Published: 2025-04-01 Updated: 2025-04-25 Words: 9,484 Chapters: 4/?

# One Stone Loose Upon the Footpath

by [Adriana in the Snow](#)

## Summary

Tubbo chose Tommy first. Before they escaped the prison they were born into, before they had their powers, before they were pressed into heroism, before a group of villains offered them an alternative, Tubbo chose Tommy. And so, Tommy chose him back every time. Even when Tubbo would have preferred he hadn't.

Six months into living with the SBI, and Tommy has almost gotten used to not having to always be Tubbo's shield. They may be villains, but their promises of protection have proven more genuine than the heroes' ever were.

Yet, threats thought long buried are rising once again. Echoes of a bygone timeline seem to push the world towards an inevitable apocalypse once more. Can the SBI protect Tubbo and Tommy from threats they still don't fully understand even after living their lives twice? Can Tommy keep what he has gained, or will something be shaken loose?

A bit of advice from someone long gone: "Keep the things you love close."

... Or you may not be able to shield them.

(This is a sequel to One More Step Out of the Pit.)

## Notes

I hate April Fools Day. I already got taken in by one joke and it wasn't even April Fools Day for me yet because the creator was in a different timezone. Have this!

Before we get started, some notes about what you need to have read before starting this story.

Required Reading: (You won't understand otherwise)

One More Step Out of the Pit

Out of Step

Every Path Has Its Puddle

Suggested Reading: Prequel fics that aren't strictly necessary, but provide a lot of context.

One Step Forward

Like Footprints on the Seashore

Two Steps Back (Still in production. It is recommended you read Two Steps Back along side this fic for full impact.)

Optional Reading: Fun things!

One Step at a Time

101 Steps to Dropping Out of High School Without Your Diploma

# Chapter 1

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“Get out of the bathroom, you stupid fuck! I need to piss!”

Phil sighed into his coffee. Techno, seated across from him at the kitchen table, did not react. He continued reading his book as though the shrieking was ambient background noise. To be fair, in this house, it may as well be.

“There are other bathrooms.”

Yeah. Because *that* argument was clearly going to work after 6 months of *this*.

“This one is the closest to my bedroom, and you’ve been in there for 20 minutes! You’re too ugly to need to spend that much time in the bathroom every morning! Get out of there!”

“I have soap in my hair!”

“Then wash it out, idiot! It takes, like, 10 seconds for a normal person!”

“Fuck you!”

An impressively creative string of cursing continued to drift down the hallway from Wilbur’s... well, what *used* to be Wilbur’s bathroom to the kitchen. It only cut off when a door was heard opening and shutting.

Once, Phil would have been curious. He would have gotten up to look down the hallway and see what on earth was happening in his house. Now, after six months of Tommy, he knew exactly what he’d find if he peaked his head out of the kitchen doorway. Wilbur would be standing in the hallway looking like a disgruntled, drowned rat clad in a (more often than not inside out) t-shirt and boxer shorts.

Phil waited, sipping at his coffee and relishing the few moments of peace.

Then, the loud, persistent banging began.

“I heard you flush the toilet,” Wilbur yelled. “Open the door! I need to do my hair!”

“I’m washing my hands. I know that’s a wild concept for someone like you, but the rest of us...”

“You motherfucker,” Wilbur interrupted. “Open. This. Door!”

“I hate them,” a new (much quieter) voice said from the kitchen doorway. Tubbo stumbled into the room, still half asleep. Today, he apparently had not been able to sleep through the chaos.

“Good morning, Tubbo,” Phil greeted pleasantly.

“Who made the coffee?” Tubbo asked.

“Me,” Techno replied, flipping a page in his book.”

“Thank fuck.”

Phil bit his tongue instead of commenting on the implied insult to himself.

“Don’t talk while brushing your teeth, dammit!”

“Meh, meh, meh. I’m Wilbur, and I’m a clean freak.” The bathroom door must be slightly open because Phil could hear Tommy’s words even though he wasn’t currently screaming them. “That’s what you sound like.”

“You just got spit foam on my shirt!”

“You’re putting that shirt in the wash after this anyway.”

“I just showered!”

The rest of their conversation was drowned out by the sound of a hair dryer turning on. Judging by the quick yelp of surprise from Wilbur, he had not been the one to decide he was drying his hair now.

Mornings were louder with Tommy in the house. However, they were also a lot more efficient, and for that, Phil could deal with a little (a lot) of screaming. It was currently only 7:30am. BT (Before Tommy) Wilbur would have been in the shower until 8:30 on a good day.

“I suppose I should start making breakfast,” Phil said, standing up and stretching. “We have the stuff for pancakes. Any topping requests?”

“Apple cinnamon,” Techno said.

“Alright. Tubbo?”

Tubbo narrowed his eyes like Phil might be asking him a trick question. Phil bit his tongue once again. Tubbo was currently in a phase where he accused Phil of bribing him anytime Phil attempted to do anything halfway decent for him. It was getting annoying, but Phil figured it was some steppingstone Tubbo was (agonizingly slowly) using to move towards becoming more comfortable with Phil.

His dislike wasn’t really about Phil at all, he’d come to understand. From a few things Tommy had mentioned in passing, he clearly had issues with his own father that he was projecting onto Phil.

At least now he considered the fact that Phil wanted Tubbo to like him... even if the teen kept implying it was for nefarious reasons.

Tubbo did not actually voice a bribing accusation this morning, though his expression very much implied one. “Blueberries,” he answered.

“Sure,” Phil said, as agreeably as possible.

The other two household members arrived in the kitchen as Phil was cooking a coin-sized test pancake. Both were dressed and mostly dry. Some of Tommy’s hair was wet (suspicious, since he had not taken a shower this morning).

Wilbur bumped Phil’s shoulder lightly on his way to the coffee machine. “Chocolate chips,” he said.

“You have to have a serving of fruit on the side,” Phil told him.

Wilbur turned his head to look at him. “I am a grown man,” he reminded with a twitch to his lips.

“Set a good example.”

Wilbur rolled his eyes and poured himself a cup of coffee without comment.

Tommy was eyeing the coffee pot with a dangerous curiosity. “Who made the...”

“Phil,” both Tubbo and Techno answered simultaneously.

“I’ll have juice then,” Tommy decided. Wilbur, who had already taken a sip of the coffee, hid a smile in his mug.

“My coffee’s fine,” Phil defended himself. “You’re all horrible.”

“Like your coffee,” Techno said. The test pancake had finished cooking, so Phil scooped it up with his spatula and flung it at Techno’s head. The man didn’t even look up from his book but still managed to catch it in his mouth.

“Bastard,” Phil accused, as he poured a full-sized pancake’s worth of batter into the pan. “Tommy, what would you like on your pancakes?”

Tommy, a glass of orange juice in hand, sidled over to check out the toppings Phil had already set out on the counter. “Chocolate chips and apples,” he decided after a moment.

“What the fuck is wrong with you?” Wilbur asked, so quickly it was like he’d already had the words in his mouth before Tommy had said anything.

“Oi! What’s wrong with that!”

“Hey, Tubbo, do you mind if we set aside some of your fertilizer so Tommy can use it as a pancake topping?”

Tubbo did not bother to respond to that.

“Shut up,” Tommy said. “You chose chocolate chips. What a basic bitch move.”

“You *also* asked for chocolate chips.”

“With apples!”

“*Exactly.*”

Phil flipped the first pancake while they argued. Their bickering was at least quieter now, and they did manage to efficiently set the table while doing it, so could Phil even complain?

The pancakes cooked quickly with a warm pan, and the conversation mellowed out as everyone was given a plate of food one by one. Phil cooked his own last, topping his pancakes with apples and a bit of syrup. He placed the leftover cut up apple pieces on Wilbur’s plate on his way to his seat, earning himself another eyeroll.

Techno and Tubbo were both already done eating by the time Phil sat. Techno because he’d been served first, and Tubbo because he and Tommy still ate faster than normal. Having been a hero himself, the habit was familiar, but also foreign to Phil. There was just a tad bit too much desperation

coloring the way they ate. In fact, despite being served last, Tommy was almost finished with his pancakes. Wilbur was barely halfway done. (Less than halfway if you counted his pile of apple slices.)

“The forecast says it’s going to be consistently warmer for the next two weeks,” Phil said while using his fork to cut off a bit of pancake. “I think winter is officially over.” He glanced at Tubbo while eating his bite. “What do you think about starting that garden you were asking about? We’ve gotten all the supplies on your list, and it seems like a good day for it.”

Tubbo scowled at him. Phil inwardly sighed and stabbed another bite of food.

“Fine,” Tubbo agreed, tone clipped. You would think Phil had suggested he go to the dentist for a tooth extraction.

“Great,” Phil said. “I’ll help you get everything set up after breakfast.”

“Great,” Tubbo echoed, his tone taking on a sarcastic as fuck tilt. Little *bastard* and his *daddy issues*.

Tommy had finished his plate now and was stealing dropped chocolate chips off of Wilbur’s plate. Wilbur was pretending not to notice him.

“We also have plans tonight,” Wilbur said, “just so you two know.”

Tommy perked up instantly. “What kind of plans?”

“The kind you are not invited to,” Phil said evenly.

Tommy rolled his eyes. (Had he always rolled his eyes in the exact same way Wilbur did, or had he acquired that habit over the last 6 months?) “You can just say evil plans,” Tommy said.

“They are not evil plans,” Phil said with a frown.

“Are they legal plans?” Tommy countered, one eyebrow raised.

Phil pressed his lips together.

“Very illegal,” Wilbur said, cheerfully. He slid one of the apple slices he was supposed to be eating onto Tommy’s plate. “Life in prison illegal.”

Death penalty illegal, Phil countered in his head, but if Tubbo and Tommy had any innocence when it came to the morality of the society around them, Phil didn’t want to take it quite yet.

Breaking a supervillain out of the Nether Prison was an instant death sentence and had been since the place was designed a century ago. Even though, at this point, none of the actually convicted supervillains who’d been thrown in there were alive, Phil had no doubts the government would still consider it breaking a supervillain out. A grandson of a notorious villain was still culpable in the eyes of the law, apparently. After all, he may have even met his grandmother once or twice when he was, like, 5.

Schlatt hadn’t done anything wrong. Well... he hadn’t done anything wrong in *this* timeline. According to Wilbur (well, Ghostbur), the circumstances that had caused him to fuck up the first timeline with zombies were not present in their current timeline.

In fact, getting him out of the Nether was a preventative measure to make sure no one else did. After all, at the end of the first timeline, Schlatt hadn't been in control of the zombies, someone else had. Letting a powerful necromancer be a sitting duck in some hole in the ground was just asking for a city brimming with zombies.

Figuring out how to break into the Nether had been a lot of work, but they'd finally managed to get all of the supplies they needed. (And it had only taken a couple of kidnappings.) Everything was now set up and working how they wanted. So, tonight it was time for an attempted prison break. Tommy and Tubbo did not need to know all of this.

"Techno will be staying with you two though," Phil said.

"We don't need a babysitter," Tommy protested.

"Yes, you definitely do," Techno snorted. "Besides," he scowled slightly. "I don't want to go."

Phil saw Tommy shoot Techno a look of discontent, but he surprisingly didn't protest the "babysitting" again. *That* did not bode well for Techno tonight.

Oh well. Not Phil's problem.

Phil finished his pancakes before Wilbur finished his plate (even though Tommy had eaten half of his apple slices).

"I think the best place for the garden is that area right outside your window," Phil said, going back to the conversation from earlier. "Why don't you two get dressed, and I'll meet you out there in a few minutes."

"Sure," Tommy said, cheerfully.

Tubbo scowled at him. "Sure."

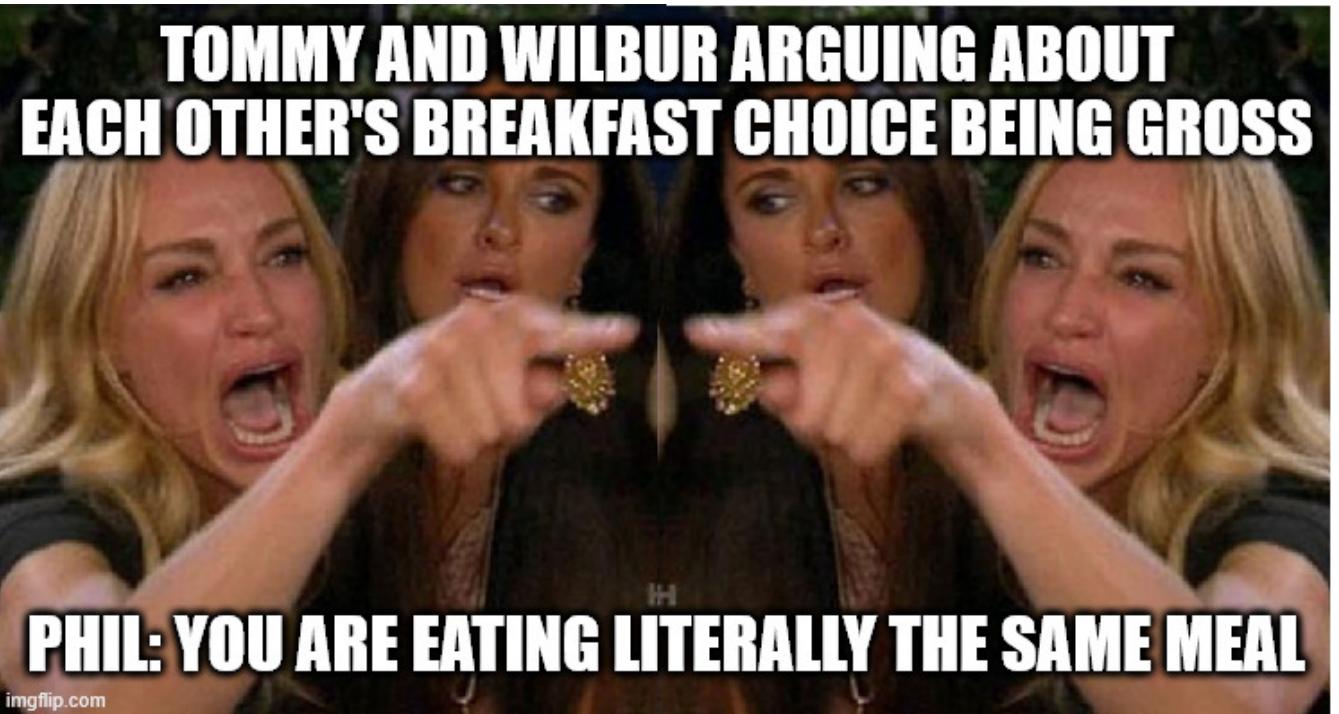
"Make sure to dress warm," Wilbur reminded. "It's not winter, but it's not summer yet either."

"Whatever," Tommy dismissed, getting to his feet. Wilbur frowned after him as he left the kitchen.

"I'll wrestle him into a sweater," Tubbo promised as he also stood up. He did not scowl at *Wilbur*, Phil noted with an unfair amount of bitterness. He shook himself internally. He'd do his best not to let this phase of Tubbo's frustrate him. The relationship he was trying to build with the child was slow going, but they'd just have to take it one step at a time.

## Chapter End Notes

**TOMMY AND WILBUR ARGUING ABOUT  
EACH OTHER'S BREAKFAST CHOICE BEING GROSS**



**PHIL: YOU ARE EATING LITERALLY THE SAME MEAL**

imgflip.com

[from Imgflip Meme Generator](#)

## Chapter 2

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“Where are we?” Schlatt asked as he stepped out of the car into the lower garage.

“We’re in our base,” Wilbur told him. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw Phil sending a text. “At least, the professional part of it. I’ll show you our house tomorrow, but for tonight, I think we should all get some sleep without the risk of zombified corpses swarming if you touch the wrong thing.”

“Alright,” Schlatt agreed. He looked more and more out of his depths every minute. It was probably a good thing he’d gone on his first car ride at night. He’d been shocked enough by what he could see of the city in the streetlights; actually, he’d mostly just been shocked by the streetlights.

Wilbur slapped a hand on his shoulder and a startled expression crossed Schlatt’s face at the impact.

“That one’s going to take some getting used to,” he said under his breath, looking at the hand.

“We’ll have to take some precautions,” Wilbur continued, beginning to lead him out of the garage into the main base, “but I think you’ll like seeing the forest. Have you ever seen a tree before?”

“There was one in my family home when I was younger,” Schlatt said idly. “It died shortly after my grandmother.”

“Ah,” Wilbur said. “Wither, uh, liked trees, then?”

Schlatt’s eyes flickered to him. “She did, actually.”

“Huh. Interesting.”

“Would you like a change of clothes, Schlatt?” Phil asked. “We don’t have much down here, but it’s all comfortable and clean.”

Schlatt’s clothes were a little, er, grubby, but to be fair, everything in the Nether was. The fact that he was wearing things that were mostly intact was impressive. Part of that had to do with his family’s relative wealth, but Ghostbur had seen him in a lot worse, so part of it was him actually cleaning himself up.

“Sure,” Schlatt replied. “Thanks.”

“No problem,” Phil replied. “I’ll meet you there.” He peeled off towards the room they usually had prisoners change in, and Wilbur continued to lead Schlatt down the various hallways.

“You doing okay?” Wilbur asked once they were alone.

Schlatt hesitated and then shrugged. “Nothing about any of this feels... real.”

“That makes sense,” Wilbur said. “It’s going to be a pretty big change. It’ll be better though.”

Schlatt snorted. “Yeah, I have heard not living in hell is typically considered ‘better.’” Wilbur chuckled back. “God,” Schlatt continued. “Everything’s so *clean*. How do you keep everything so

clean?"

It actually wasn't too clean in the underground base. It was pretty big and there were only three of them cleaning it, so it was constantly a little bit dusty. They *did* let loose a hoard of Roombas on the place every so often though.

"Mostly it's just that we have vacuum cleaners and bleach," Wilbur told him.

"I see..."

The man didn't know what a vacuum cleaner was, did he?

"Here's where you'll stay tonight," Wilbur said when they made it to their destination. It was one of the prisoner cells, but they'd disengaged the lock temporarily. Wilbur had hung curtains up on the one-way mirror and had put an old, more colorful comforter on the bed.

"Thanks," Schlatt said, peering at the space for a few moments before stepping inside.

"There's a bathroom there, but it's just a toilet. There's one with a shower in the hallway," Wilbur said. "I went ahead and stocked it with soap and stuff ahead of time. Do... do you know how to work a shower?"

"Theoretically," Schlatt said with a shrug. "There was no indoor plumbing in The Pit."

"...Let me give you a quick tutorial."

Despite Schlatt's nonchalant response to Wilbur asking him about the shower, he could see a hint of awe in the man's face when water began to come from the shower head. Wilbur explained how to mess with the temperature settings, letting him put his hand under the water to see for himself. Schlatt tried to keep his face neutral, but it was clear the concept of warm running water was blowing his mind.

Phil was back by the time they finished with the shower, and Techno appeared only a few minutes later.

"And this is Techno," Wilbur said. Techno looked Schlatt up and down from the position he'd taken near the door. "Say hello, Techno."

"Hello." Techno replied.

"Alright, well," Wilbur said. "I'm going to go grab you some food. Any requests?" Schlatt just shot him an unimpressed look and Wilbur laughed. "Yeah, alright. I'll get something edible and be back in a few."

He left to go to the kitchen then. Not wanted to overwhelm a man who had lived his entire life on a diet of mostly unseasoned pork, mushrooms, potatoes, and occasionally melons, Wilbur thought the best bet would be leftover mashed potatoes from dinner, a couple of bland granola bars that had been lingering in the back of their snack cabinet, and a single banana as a treat. He knew Tommy and Tubbo had gone absolutely wild for any type of tropical fruit when they'd first arrived.

He made it to the top of the staircase to their house, still distracted by thoughts of what to get Schlatt to drink (probably just water for now). He pushed open the secret door and stepped into the house.

"Did you kidnap someone?" a voice asked from the darkness.

Wilbur jumped, registering who had spoken a moment too late to keep himself from startling. “What?” Wilbur asked, squinting to make out the vague outline of Tommy a few feet away. “Tommy, it’s 3 in the morning. You’re supposed to be asleep.”

“I heard the garage door open,” Tommy explained, “but then you used the descending platform to go directly downstairs instead of coming through the door by our bedroom. Then, Techno went downstairs a few minutes ago. Did you kidnap someone?”

“No,” Wilbur said. “We did not kidnap someone.”

“Then you brought home something dangerous?”

“No.”

Wilbur’s eyes were beginning to adjust to the darkness now and he could see Tommy squinting at him in suspicion. “Are you lying?”

“No, gremlin, I’m not lying,” Wilbur said. He reached forward to ruffle Tommy’s hair, but Tommy just glared, still suspicious. Wilbur sighed. “Look, it is a person, but we didn’t kidnap them. They came here willingly. They’re an ally of ours.”

“Then why are they currently trapped in your supervillain lair?”

“They aren’t trapped,” Wilbur said. “They just need a place to stay and there aren’t any more beds up here. Plus, their powers can be a bit... volatile, so letting them chill out in a controlled environment is for the best.”

“What kind of volatile?” Tommy asked. “Do they explode shit?”

“No, it’s nothing like that,” Wilbur assured.

Tommy did not look at all soothed by this conversation. He looked more wary than he had when he’d first caught Wilbur.

Wilbur sighed, deciding the best course of action was to give him a bit of the truth. “He’s a necromancer,” he explained. “He’s not 100% in control at the moment, so if he touches dirt, he could accidentally reanimate something. I personally don’t want a 3am zombie bear on our porch, so he’s staying downstairs for a bit.”

“Oh,” Tommy said, a little less suspicious. “Can I meet him?”

“Sure,” Wilbur said, “but in the morning. I’m just grabbing him some food, and then we’re all going to go to bed. *You* should already be in bed.”

There was a moment where Wilbur thought he was going to continue to argue, but eventually he relented. “Fine,” Tommy agreed. “I want to meet him first thing in the morning though.”

“Can ‘first thing in the morning’ be 10am and not 6am?” Wilbur asked, his head already hurting from lack of sleep.

“It’s not my fault you guys stayed out supervillaining until 3am,” Tommy said with an evil little half smile.

Tommy turned to start back off down the hallway towards Wilbur's bathroom with too much bounce in his step for 3am. Wilbur followed him, walking into the kitchen while Tommy went to use the bathroom.

He grabbed a couple of bottles of water even though Schlatt's room was set up with a sink and then went digging for the energy bars. They'd gotten them a few months back purely because Tommy and Tubbo liked to hide them in their room, but they'd stopped going missing a while ago now.

He took a minute to heat up a small bowl of mashed potatoes in the microwave. They had a bit more (that is, *any*) butter in them than Schlatt was used to, but it should still be relatively familiar. He heard Tommy finish in the bathroom and walk back towards his bedroom. Wilbur stuck a spoon in the mashed potatoes once they were warmed up and grabbed a banana before heading back into the hallway.

The secret door was propped open slightly.

"That fucking, *child*," he groaned to himself as he opened the door the rest of the way. He hurried down the stairs, hoping to catch the child before he figured out where to go. Unfortunately, however, Ghostbur had shown the children every corner of the underground base over the last few months, and Tommy probably knew exactly where they'd take a guest (willing or not) since the cells were the only places with beds.

Fucking, *Ghostbur* giving into the fucking *puppy dog* eyes every time he caught Tubbo and Tommy doing reconnaissance. And fucking, Tommy who was faster than Wilbur when Wilbur wasn't juggling a hot bowl of mashed potatoes.

Still, Wilbur wasn't too concerned. At least, until he heard the yelling.

Uh oh.

Wilbur flung open the cell door and his eyes widened at the scene before him. "What the fuck is going on here?!"

Phil was struggling to hold a feral-looking Tommy in the air to keep him away from Schlatt who, on his part, looked completely flabbergasted about his current situation. The man was backed into a corner far away from a flailing Tommy with a ripped shirt and bloody fingernail marks across his cheek.

Techno, meanwhile, was in almost the exact position he'd been in when Wilbur had left, arms crossed over his chest as he serenely observed the scene. Wilbur shot him a glare and Techno shrugged unhelpfully.

"Is this your 'ally,' Wilbur?" Tommy spat venomously. "Bad fucking choice."

"What?" Wilbur asked. "What are you talking about?"

"Who is this child, and why is he attacking me?" Schlatt asked.

"Fuck you, you motherfucking bastard!" Tommy growled. He moved his head in an attempt to bite Phil. Admittedly, this would be fairly normal behavior if Wilbur or even Techno was the one holding him, but Tommy tended to go a bit more docile when Phil was carrying him. (He'd at one point divulged that even though he knew it wasn't true, part of his brain still insisted Phil would snap him in

half if he pissed him off too much... which was concerning, but they were working on it. He did not seem too worried about it right now.)

"Toms, please," Phil said, one part scolding and one part soothing.

Schlatt, meanwhile, had paled suddenly like he'd seen a ghost... other than the one he was used to seeing. "Oh my god. You're that one kid."

"You two... know each other?" Wilbur asked. It was possible, of course. They were both from the Nether. Wilbur hadn't ever really considered that they'd crossed paths since they were from different social classes within the Nether's society. Also, as long as Ghostbur had been visiting him, Schlatt had been basically a hermit living in his ancestral house. What on Earth could Schlatt have done to Tommy to elicit such a response?

"Fuck you!"

"But," Schlatt was saying, "Then is...?"

"He doesn't want to *fucking* talk to you," Tommy snarled with a protective ferocity he had for very few things.

And oh. Oh no. That had been the wrong question. It wasn't what Schlatt had done to *Tommy*. What had Schlatt done to *Tubbo*?

Wilbur realized very quickly that he already knew the answer.

"Oh, god," Wilbur said, feeling a migraine coming on. "*Please* tell me your dead kid isn't *Tubbo*."

And by the stricken look on Schlatt's face, it was clear he could not tell Wilbur that without it being a lie.

## Chapter End Notes

Wilbur who has heard pieces of both sides of this story: [Oh no.](#)

# Chapter 3

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“...Fucking *what?*” Phil asked from next to Tommy’s ear. Tommy felt the man’s attention slip for a split second and took advantage. His sudden increased weight made Phil yelp in surprise and drop him. Tommy rolled as he hit the ground, finding his feet halfway between Phil and Techno and out of reach of both.

Unfortunately, Wilbur was currently standing between him and the bastard, making any attempts to jump him again unlikely to succeed. Tommy thought about trying it anyway.

However, he’d had many opportunities to try his hand-to-hand skills against all three of the supervillains in the room and knew a blatant, direct attack while surrounded in an enclosed space was futile. He’d end up in the lake without even landing a punch. At least, in normal circumstances he’d end up in the lake. He wasn’t sure where it’d land him if he attacked for real here in the middle of their supervillain lair, inserting himself into some plan they had (that he knew nothing about) revolving around some “ally” he knew far too much about.

“Wait,” Wilbur was saying, one hand up placatingly. (The other was holding a bowl. Water bottles and protein bars were tucked under his arm.) “Let’s just pause and talk about this for a minute.”

Tommy didn’t want to “talk.” He didn’t want to sit quietly and listen to some lecture. He didn’t want to be told why his behavior was wrong and stupid and ruining their plans before he was sent on his way. He *wanted* to bite Tubbo’s bastard sperm donor.

“*Fuck that!* Fuck him! You brought that bastard into my house! It better be so I can strangle him with my bare hands.”

“Tommy, look,” Wilbur reasoned in that calm, condescending way everyone always fucking did, “you’re pissed, but can we just chill out and talk about it for one minute. At least to figure out what’s going on?”

Tommy bared his teeth at him. “One one-thousand,” he said, pointedly. “Two one-thousand.”

Wilbur looked so disappointed; it’d be funny on any other day. He shot a look at Techno. “I blame you for this.” This was a foolish thing for Wilbur to waste time saying, because Tommy was still counting the seconds.

Wilbur seemed to realize this, because he turned back to Tommy. “I get it. He fucked up with Tubbo. That’s shitty, and Tubbo and you don’t have to interact with him. But...”

“But, but, but,” Tommy spat before Wilbur could give his stupid justifications. “Fuck ‘but.’ Let me kill him.”

Wilbur frowned at him, a bit of irritation slipping into his tone as he continued, “But,” he said, “he’s also an ally, and we need him.”

Tommy wasn’t sure how to feel about the irritated expression on Wilbur’s face right now. It looked the same as it normally did, the way he scrunched his nose up like he’d smelt something bad, and his

lips pulled taut. Tommy's daily goal for the past 6 months had been to get Wilbur to pull that exact expression at least once. Though it looked no different now, it felt different. It felt patronizing.

"You really couldn't have picked anyone else from The Pit?" Tommy asked. He felt the urge to pace but could only take a few steps before putting himself back in grabbing range of one of them, so he ended up doing what had to look like a silly little dance between them. "One of the cannibals, maybe?"

Wilbur frowned as he watched Tommy try to pace. "I understand you're upset, but we put a lot of work into getting the orb to work and there's no going back now. He's here now. The decision's been made."

"Now wait a second," Techno spoke up, and stepped forward. Tommy stopped pacing and tensed, preparing to at least try to dodge the fucker if he tried to grab Tommy. "He's got a point."

Wait, what?

"Techno, please," Wilbur said, his irritated expression shifting from Tommy to Techno. It didn't change in form at all, Tommy noted, and it didn't look nearly as condescending when not pointed solely at Tommy.

"No, no," Techno continued. "He's here because I was outvoted, but now I'm demanding a recount. This is looking like a 2-2 to me. Actually, a 3-2 unless you think Tubbo's going to be voting against Tommy and me."

Tommy blinked, feeling some of that anxious energy that had been driving him to pace drain away. It helped that when Techno had stepped forward, he'd stepped between Tommy and Phil and that Wilbur's focus was mostly on Techno now.

"Tubbo and Tommy don't get a vote on this stuff," Wilbur pointed out which made Tommy's anger spike even if it was true. They'd agreed to that when they'd first moved in. They weren't supervillains and unlike how they weren't technically heroes, that came with the perk of not having to do any work related to supervillainy. It also meant they didn't get to vote on (or often even hear about) supervillain work. (Not that Tommy had actually had a vote as a hero either.) Still, it pissed him off today.

"They don't get a vote on supervillain activities," Techno agreed, "but you brought him to our house, and Tubbo and Tommy live here. So, yeah, I think their vote should count."

Wilbur sighed at that, but to Tommy's surprise, it looked like he was actually considering the point.

The anger cooled again. "Oh, Technoblade," Tommy said. "I'm sorry I put cooked spaghetti in your shower while you were trying to make Tubbo go to bed tonight."

Techno turned to blink at him. "You did what?"

"It's in the past, Technoblade," Tommy said with an innocent smile. "Alliances have shifted."

"...We'll deal with that later," Techno said. Ah, shit, Tommy was going to get thrown in the lake again. Techno turned back to Wilbur. "The point is, to quote my ally on this, 'fuck him'."

Wilbur gave a defeated sigh.

"What, uh," the bastard said, speaking up for the first time since he'd dared to ask about Tubbo, "what exactly does the pink-haired one have against me?"

“Zombies,” Wilbur answered without looking at him. “So many zombies.”

“I see.”

“I would like to point out,” Phil interjected. “That he has to stay here, at least for now.”

Tommy leaned forward to glare at him from around Techno.

Phil just raised an eyebrow. “He has necromancy powers,” Phil reminded, patiently. “Most necromancers start to get their powers in late childhood, around 8-10, and they learn to control them as they slowly grow in strength over their entire lifetime. Because he lived his entire life in The Nether, Schlatt has had no practice with his powers, but they are at the strength of an adult. At this point,” Phil paused. “How old are you, Schlatt?”

“32,” the bastard answered.

Phil paused for half a second. Then he continued, “At... 32, he probably has an area of effect of approximately 10km or 6 miles in every direction, and he has no experience turning off his powers. If he leaves this basement, chances are he’s going to resurrect everything that has died in this forest in the past decade. We also can’t put a power suppressant cuff on him yet because of the physical effects of power withdrawal for 32 years. It’s similar to the reason recently released high security prisoners are put into wayside houses for a few weeks before being allowed to go home, but worse because he’s never had even limited access to his powers.”

Tommy had worked at one of those houses occasionally as a hero. Long term restrictions on powers could cause physical and mental damage when those restrictions were taken off, and there would be an even higher chance of damage if powers were restricted again before a full recovery.

“We could probably figure out somewhere else he could stay,” Phil continued, “but setting that up would take weeks if not a month. So, at least for now, he has to stay here.”

In content, that could almost be read as a scolding. It was explaining all the reasons why Tommy’s position of kicking the bastard out on his ass was wrong. Yet, it didn’t end with any derisive jab at Tommy’s intelligence for not knowing it, and his tone was more informative than scornful.

“I don’t like it,” Tommy stated.

Phil nodded like he was actually listening to Tommy’s perspective. “I understand,” he said, “but it is the current situation.”

Tommy glanced at Techno to see if the man had a counter for Phil’s points. However, he did not seem to have an argument; he was just frowning with a murderous look in his eyes.

Phil followed Tommy’s gaze. “*You* already knew that,” he pointed out. Now, his tone was edging on scolding.

Techno just huffed.

“I know you of all people don’t want zombies in our forest,” Phil said. His tone had been patient with Tommy, but it was losing that patience now.

“We could just...”

“No.”

They stared at each other for a few long moments, but it was clear the conversation was still going on, just silently.

“You know *why*,” said Phil.

“Fine,” Techno gave in with scowl.

“Great!” Phil said, a bit of ironically false cheer in his tone. “We’re all good here then? At least for now? We can pause this conversation until the sun is in the sky? Maybe even until we’ve gotten 8 hours of sleep?”

Tommy crossed his arms and frowned to show his contempt for this decision and Techno stared intently at the wall behind Phil.

“Or at least 4,” Phil corrected himself. “Now, Wilbur, give the man his food.”

“Right,” Wilbur said, moving to set the load he’d been juggling the entire time down on the nightstand near the cell’s bed. He shoved the bowl of mashed potatoes into the bastard’s hands.

“Potatoes?” he asked.

“Thought it’d be familiar enough,” Wilbur said. “Though they’ve got some extra stuff in them.”

Techno moved to take his position against the wall again, watching the interaction with disinterest.

“The green bits are totally mold,” Tommy told the bastard flippantly as he turned to stalk across the room and lean against the wall next to Techno.

“They are not,” Wilbur said, cutting a glare at him. “It’s just herbs,” Wilbur explained. “Seasoning.”

“Chives?” Schlatt asked.

“You guys have chives in The Nether?” Wilbur asked. “Then why did Tommy act like I was trying to poison him every time I gave him something green for the first 2 months he lived here?”

The bastard glanced towards where Tommy and Techno stood; Tommy glowered at him. He looked back down at the potatoes. “Probably because he was a second ring street kid,” he answered with a shrug. He took a contemplative bite of the potatoes. “Also, he’s a bit young. They were always pretty hard to grow in The Pit. The last of them got wiped out by an aphid infestation when I was maybe 17. We were lucky to keep them that long. Whole swatches of plant species died after my grandmother was no longer there to care for them.”

He set down the mashed potatoes after a few bites and grabbed a bottle of water. He had to get Wilbur to help him open it, confused by the plastic top.

Techno spoke up after the bastard took a few sips of water. “Wait,” he said. “So that means Tubbo is Wither’s great-grandson?” He paused. “Ya know... that actually explains a lot.”

“Who’s Wither?” Tommy asked.

Schlatt, who’d been fiddling with the cap of his water bottle, looked up suddenly. “You don’t know who Wither is?” he asked, his tone strange.

“Should I?” Tommy asked. He made sure to keep his expression pinched so the bastard knew Tommy still hated him.

“You... yes.”

Tommy squinted at him. “Is this like, one of your Pit A Ranker bullshit things? Should I know who that is because she was some sort of important person in your little class system? News flash, the street rats don’t care about your hierarchy crap. We just care if your food looks stealable.”

Schlatt opened his mouth but then closed it again. He took a swig of his water like it was vodka.

“She was an infamous supervillain,” Techno explained, leaning over towards him. “One of the two supervillains they made The Pit for. She called her power withering. She could turn people into dust with one touch. If she was pissed enough, without even touching them.”

“Damn,” Tommy said. “Tubbo’s father is a necromancer, and his great-grandmother had that? Poor Tubbo. He just got the ability to grow plants?”

Schlatt choked suddenly on another swig of water, spitting up the mouthful all over his own front.

Everyone turned to look at him as he coughed.

“Tubbo can grow plants?” he asked once he’d recovered.

“He’s been known to do fungi and mold on occasion as well,” Phil supplied.

The bastard looked a bit pale after his choking fit, not that Tommy cared. He wished the guy had died from it. “Right, yeah, okay.” He pointed at the bed with his thumb. “I might need to lie down. I’m sleeping there, right?”

“Yeah,” Phil said. “Actually, the rest of us should be heading upstairs anyway. I assume Wilbur gave you a call button.”

“Yep,” the bastard said, his voice still a bit horse.

“Great,” Phil said. “We’ll let you rest. Everyone else, let’s go.”

Tommy wasn’t happy about Schlatt being here, let alone leaving him down here alone, but even Techno seemed to want to leave, so he was outvoted at least in this. He let himself be shooed out of the room by Phil, shooting one last dirty look at the bastard over his shoulder.

Chapter End Notes

**WILBUR, TRYING TO TALK TOMMY DOWN FROM KILLING A MAN.**



**TECHNO: REMEMBER I WANT TO KILL HIM TOO.**

imgflip.com

[from Imgflip Meme Generator](#)

# Chapter 4

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Everyone agreed that they should let Tubbo get a full night's sleep before bringing up the topic of his estranged father in the basement. The rest of them wouldn't be getting a full night's sleep, but a couple of hours may improve the general mood (which was currently very tense). Phil, Wilbur, and Techno were good at leaving downstairs things downstairs, but Tommy had no such experience and looked ready to bite something.

The biteful expression only deepened when Wilbur suggested Tommy sleep in his room so as to not disturb Tubbo.

"Or," Techno suggested neutrally. "You can sleep in mine."

The reaction to this offer was pretty much exactly what Techno had expected. Tommy perked up, his expression clearing, but there was still a certain bite to it that said he knew exactly what he was doing. "Sounds like a great solution, *ally*," he said. Meanwhile, Wilbur gave them both a look like a puppy who'd just gotten kicked.

Somehow, Wilbur managed to keep his mouth shut. (Not that anyone in the room wasn't acutely aware of the jealousy surely burning in him. Wilbur would go sleep in his own room, but Techno had no delusions his sheets would be unstained in the morning... later morning.)

"Sounds like everything's sorted then," Phil said, intentionally ignoring the tension in the room. "We'll reconvene at," he glanced at his watch and sighed, "let's say 7:30am. Then we can deal with," he waved his hand around. "All of this."

"Alright," Techno agreed.

"Fine," said Wilbur.

Tommy was hesitating though. He was still frowning, but his expression didn't look like the same type of unhappy it'd been since he'd seen Schlatt. "I want..."

"I'll get you your *cow*," Wilbur said, a bit of his frustration leaking into his tone as he turned on his heel to strut off towards his bedroom.

The more vulnerable expression left Tommy's face in favor of a scowl towards Wilbur's back. Wilbur's bedroom door snapped shut.

"I'm going to bed," Phil stated, turning towards his own bedroom, and Techno glanced at Tommy.

"C'mon kid," he said.

Tommy followed him through the living room to Techno's bedroom and stood in the corner with his arms crossed while Techno grabbed an extra pillow and blanket from the closet for him. They left the bedroom door slightly ajar for now.

"Alright, come on," Techno said after setting up the bed. He glanced at Tommy who was still in the corner looking pissed. "Simmer down now."

"He's in my house," Tommy said, and the possessiveness was new, almost Wilbur-like in tone.

"Trust me, kid, you're in good company," Techno replied, "Best save the attitude for when you have someone to argue with."

It took a moment, but Tommy seemed to decide to heed him, his poster relaxing a bit as he stepped toward the bed. He sat, but didn't lay down yet, not that Techno expected him to. Tommy didn't sleep without Henry (other than when he occasionally fell asleep on the couch, but that was always on accident).

Techno stepped into his bathroom to take out his contacts, leaving the door open.

"Do you really just poke your own eyeball to get those out?" Tommy asked from the bed.

"Basically, yes," Techno said. He closed the eye he'd already removed the contact from so he could glance at Tommy from the still clear eye. "Do not try it," he scolded when he saw Tommy's hand was near his own eyes. "You don't know what you're doing, and you don't have clean hands."

"You look weird like that," Tommy informed him. If Techno's eyes weren't currently busy, he'd roll them.

"Do not scratch your cornea while I'm blind," Techno warned him before turning back to the mirror. He took the second contact out swiftly, storing it in the waiting multi-purpose solution before grabbing his glasses.

When he turned back to Tommy, the boy thankfully had his hands in his lap.

"Teach me how to wear contacts," Tommy said upon finding Techno's attention on him.

"You don't need contacts."

"I could!" Tommy said.

"Nah," Techno said, reaching up to undo his braid. "After me, Phil was very insistent Wilbur give you an eye exam as part of your health checkup. You have 20-20 vision, or I would have heard about it."

Tommy frowned.

"You don't want contacts, Tommy," Techno told him. He walked back over to sink onto the bed.

"Maybe I do!" Tommy said. "I could wear those ones that just change your eye color for, like, covert missions and stuff."

Techno didn't bother to respond. He just shook his head and laid down.

"Don't ignore me," Tommy complained.

Techno closed his eyes.

"You suck."

Techno batted the hand coming to poke his nose away without opening his eyes. "If you still want contacts in the afternoon, I'll think about buying you some," Techno said, "but only if you let me sleep for less than 4 hours I'm allowed tonight."

“Fine,” Tommy said. “I want red ones.”

“I believe no other color would be appropriate,” Techno replied.

“Or do I want blue, but a slightly different blue than my actual eyes so I can freak Wilbur out? Or green and I can just tell him they were always green? Or...?”

“Tommy,” Techno said.

“Yeah?”

“Shush.”

“Right.” He actually did quiet down then. Techno felt him shift so he was sitting up against the headboard to wait.

He did not have to wait for long. Techno let his eyes fall back open when he heard a sound from the living room. Tommy’s stuffed cow Henry poked through the slightly ajar door; Ghostbur’s body phased through the door.

Ghostbur floated over to the bed, the cow’s forehead pinched delicately between two of his fingers so he would not stain anywhere except for the area Tommy had already asked him to make blue. He deposited Henry onto Tommy’s lap.

Tension Techno hadn’t even noticed in Tommy’s frame faded now that the stuffed animal was in his grasps. “Thanks,” he said. He stroked his thumb across the cow’s head, his touch lingering briefly on the blue spot. Then he looked up at a still hovering Ghostbur.

“I know you’re Wilbur,” Tommy said, scowling. “Fuck off.”

The ghostly figure scowled back at him and then vanished.

Tommy huffed, but moved to lay down, arms wrapped around his cow. He was asleep within minutes. Techno took his glasses off and went to sleep as well.

~~~~

It felt like it took less than 4 minutes instead of less than 4 hours for Techno’s alarm to ring. The moment they stepped into the living room, Techno had to wonder if going to bed had been the correct choice. Everyone seemed even grumpier on inadequate sleep than they had been on no sleep.

Still, Tubbo would likely be up within half an hour if left to his own devices, and while everyone disagreed on if Schlatt should be here or not, they all agreed someone needed to talk to Tubbo about it.

Phil talking to Tubbo was never going to be an option, and Tommy was back to foaming at the mouth, so it had to be either Techno or Wilbur. (This was decided against Tommy’s wishes.)

They ended up doing rock-paper-scissors for it, and Techno was unsure if he wanted to win or not. On one hand, Wilbur was on the wrong side of this argument, and getting to bias the deciding vote would be beneficial. On the other hand... having to wake up Tubbo (already a dangerous proposition) and tell him his long-lost father (whom he clearly had issues with) had shown up for a visit was not Techno’s idea of a good time.

Wilbur ended up ‘winning.’ Phil and Wilbur went downstairs to wake up Schlatt and bring him upstairs. Then, the four of them sat in awkward silence while Wilbur went down the hall to knock on Tubbo and Tommy’s bedroom door. Techno and Tommy sat on the couch, Tommy’s scowl a bit less intimidating with a stuffed cow perched on his knee. Schlatt sat in an armchair not looking at any of them, and Phil stood within Tommy-grabbing distance in case the kid decided to say “fuck it” and go for him again.

Techno expected the conversation with Tubbo to take at least half an hour, maybe more. He was expecting... he didn’t know. Screaming? Crying? A tree growing through the window and piercing Schlatt’s heart? Yet, the house was silent for the less than 5 minutes Wilbur was in the bedroom.

They were all surprised by the door opening as quickly as it did, and so were all turned to look when Tubbo silently stepped into the hallway.

He walked down the hallway and into the living room, Wilbur at his heels. His expression appeared neutral, an odd thing since Tubbo’s true neutral expression made it look like he was constantly planning homicide.

He stood at the entrance to the living room for a moment, letting seconds tick by in silence as he observed the living room’s occupants.

Schlatt was the one to break the silence, his voice hesitant and small. “Tubbo?”

Tubbo’s eyes focused in on him. “Schlatt,” he said neutrally.

“You’re alive.” He sounded like he didn’t quite believe it, like maybe all of this was a dream.

“And?” Tubbo asked, one eyebrow raising slightly. “That’s not exactly news to me.” His eyes disinterestedly slid off of Schlatt and onto Phil. “Wilbur gave me the summary. Do what you want. If he was important enough to drag him out of The Pit, keep him. I don’t care.”

“He kicked you out!” Tommy roared, jumping to his feet. “In The Pit! He might as well have told you to go die!”

“It’s been over 6 years,” Tubbo said, turning to face Tommy with an aloof air. “Who cares?”

“I care!” Tommy declared. His eyes narrowed. “*You* care,” he accused.

“I really don’t,” Tubbo denied evenly. He turned away from a fuming Tommy to look at Phil again. “Is that all the three of you needed from me?”

Phil hesitated for a quarter of a second. “Yeah, mate. That’s all.”

“Then I’m going to go garden.”

“Tubbo!” Tommy exclaimed even as the boy brushed past him on the way to the front door. His path took him right by Schlatt’s chair, but he didn’t even spare the man a glance.

Tommy gaped at the door after it snapped shut behind Tubbo. Then he rounded on Wilbur. “Fine!” he said. “Keep the bastard. See if I care!” He rounded the couch and all but pushed Wilbur out of the way to get to the hallway.

“Where are you going?” Wilbur asked.

"I'm packing," Tommy turned back to spit. "I am not sleeping under the same roof as that man."

"Tommy," Wilbur groaned, his tone somewhere between concerned and exasperated. He followed him down the hall and into his room. Techno heard the arguing start up immediately, though what was being said was at a low enough volume he couldn't make it out.

And then it was just Techno, Phil, and the man of the hour.

Techno made eye contact with Phil. Phil jerked his head at the door. Techno grimaced but heeded the silent request. He didn't want to be the one to deal with Schlatt anyway.

When Techno arrived at the newly designated gardening area, Tubbo was already knee deep in the dirt. (He was still in his pajamas, Techno noted.) He was yanking up fistfuls of green with clipped motions. Whatever plant it was grew back under his palms instantly just for him to tear it up again.

Techno cleared his throat. "Hey," he said.

"Hey." His calm expression was countered by the force he was currently using to uproot the plants he was growing.

Techno hesitated. "If it helps, I'm not a big fan of your father either."

"Don't call him that," Tubbo said calmly, almost cheerfully, as a hunk of dirt came up with the plant in his hand, "and no, it doesn't help."

Tubbo continued to grow and rip up a plant in the same 1x1 ft area. Techno saw a flash of orange.  
"What are you doing?"

"Weeding."

Techno took a step closer and kicked one of the bunches Tubbo had thrown aside to reveal a small bit of orange. "Are these carrots?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Those aren't usually considered weeds."

"Carrots are evil."

"You... eat them when Phil cooks them with honey," Techno pointed out.

"Cooked carrots are fine," Tubbo said, pulling out another bunch. "Scorch the enemy."

"Ah," Techno said. Man... they were going to have a lot of carrots. They were small carrots to be fair, but still. Tubbo was... making a lot and there was no sign of him stopping anytime soon.

Techno didn't know what else to say, so he just sat there awkwardly for probably 5-10 minutes, watching the repetitive movement of Tubbo's hands. Tubbo didn't seem inclined to say anything either.

"So, uh, how long are you planning on doing that?" Techno finally asked.

"You don't have to sit there and watch me," Tubbo pointed out, his voice unnervingly level.

Techno... kinda felt like he did need to do that. Yeah, leaving Tubbo alone right now didn't feel like the best option. "...Okay." Techno then proceeded to sit there and watch him.

When it was clear Techno wasn't going to just leave, Tubbo spoke again in that same dead tone he'd been using all morning. "Is there something else you'd prefer to do?"

"We could..." Techno paused to think. "Cook carrots?"

Tubbo finally paused in his "weeding" and looked around him at the abundance of carrots he'd tossed about. He blinked like he hadn't realized what he'd been doing.

"Yeah, okay," Tubbo said, his voice taking on a bit of life again. "Maybe that's a good idea."

~~~

Tubbo didn't seem inclined to go back inside and cook the carrots in the kitchen, so Techno made him a fire down by the lake. Tubbo was kind enough to grow them a few different seasonings, but Techno did go back inside to grab salt.

He wasn't sure where Schlatt or Phil were, but he heard arguing still happening down the hall from Tommy and Tubbo's bedroom.

Tubbo had grown what Techno estimated to be about 50 pounds of carrots, not counting the steams. They decided to only cook about a pound of them and then they would donate the rest to Niki to distribute at some point. It was, er, a little early in the season for fresh carrots, so Techno was sure people would appreciate them.

Techno didn't know if he could say Tubbo calmed down while they cooked, mostly because his incredibly upset expression didn't look much different than calm (as Techno had learned today). He certainly didn't seem happy, but there was no way to tell if Techno giving him a task was helping or not.

It was about an hour after Tommy had stormed off and about half an hour into carrot prep when Tommy appeared. He had a large backpack on his back.

Techno raised an eyebrow as he approached. "Are you actually running away?"

"I'm not running away," Tommy said, throwing down his backpack and sitting down on a nearby log. "First of all, you don't own me, so I can't run away," he said. "Second, I'm not leaving. I'm just on a habitat strike."

"A habitat strike?" Techno asked.

"It's like a hunger strike, but I just don't sleep in your house. I'm still eating your food though."

"Ah," Techno said.

"What are you two doing?" Tommy asked.

"We're cooking carrots," Tubbo replied.

"Where'd you get them?" Tommy asked. Techno was surprised at how light his voice was, considering he'd been pretty pissy with Tubbo the last they'd spoken.

“Grew them,” Tubbo replied.

“That’s a lot.”

“You should see the buckets in the shed,” Techno said idly. “Want to help?”

“Sure,” Tommy agreed easily. “What do you need?”

“Just chop off the tops for now,” Techno told him, handing him a knife.

Tommy did as he asked without complaint, and Techno noticed a bit of the cutting tension radiating off of Tubbo faded now that Tommy was here. They descended into some sort of peace while prepping and starting to roast the carrots over the fire.

Techno had brought a few paper plates and served the carrots up as they cooked. It wasn’t the most balanced breakfast, but it was fine, and the kids seemed to like it.

They sat near the fire even after the carrots were cooked and eaten, Tubbo and Tommy sitting side by side on a couple of chairs they’d dragged over while Techno kept the fire stoked.

It was a few hours before Wilbur finally got impatient enough to investigate where they’d all gone.

“What are you guys doing?” he asked as he approached.

Tommy looked up and threw a discarded carrot top at him. It smacked him in the chest. Wilbur did not seem impressed.

“Fuck off,” Tommy said. “This is a Team Carrots only meeting.”

“Team Carrots?” Wilbur asked.

“It’s only for people whose taste in friends isn’t wretched!” Tommy tossed another carrot top at Wilbur.

Wilbur sighed. “Okay,” he said. “Are you coming in for lunch, though?”

“No!” Tommy declared. “Team Carrots members only eat carrots and sleep under the stars.”

“No, they do fucking not,” Tubbo said immediately.

“Wha? But Tubbo!”

“I am sleeping in the bed, Tommy. And I’m eating...” he glanced at Wilbur.

“Roasted chicken thighs,” Wilbur offered.

“Chicken.”

“Techno?” Tommy said, bottom lip pushed slightly out, pouting.

Techno raised an eyebrow. “Bruh, I helped build that house. I’m not sleeping outside.”

Tommy folded his arms. “Well, I’m sleeping outside and I’m the president of Team Carrots, so it still counts.”

"Bet," Wilbur said casually.

Tommy threw another carrot top at him. "Just fuck off."

"Why is he the president of Team Carrots?" Tubbo asked, Techno. "I didn't vote for him. Did you vote for him?"

"Nah," Techno said. "I also didn't vote on the name Team Carrots."

"Shut up you two," Tommy said. "We need to present a united front."

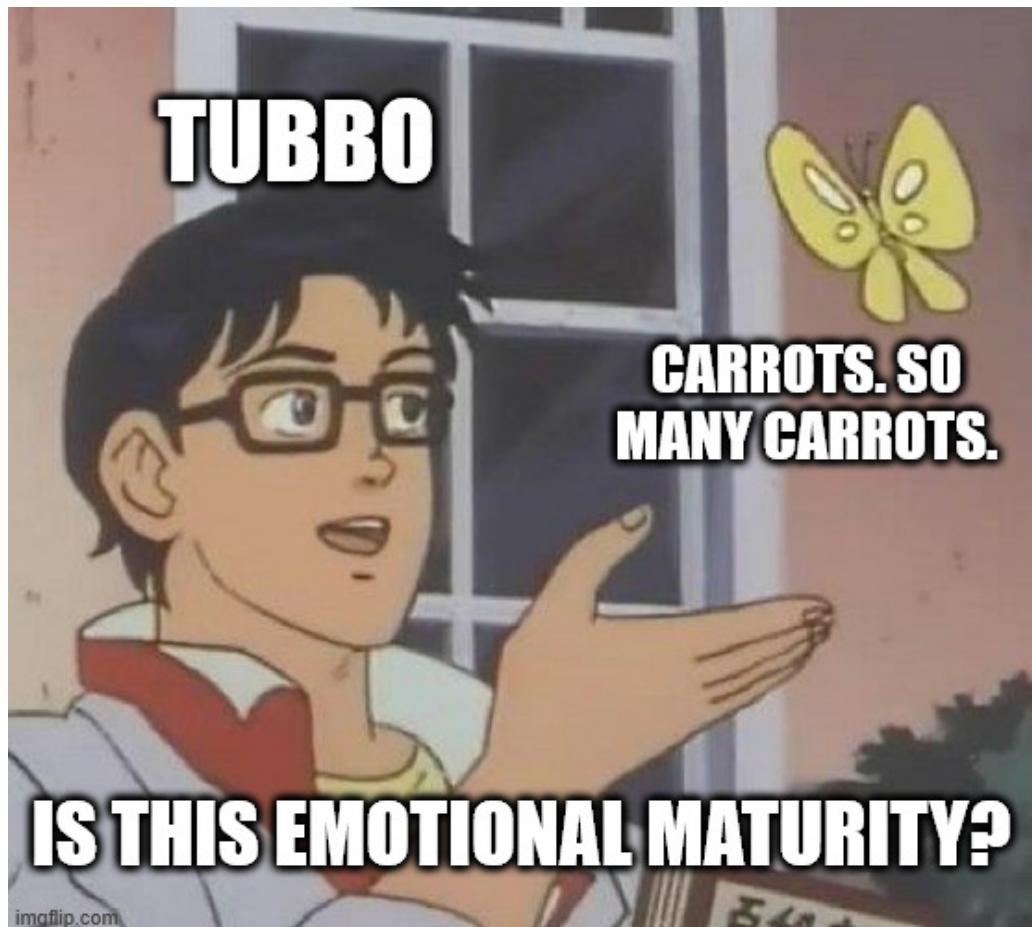
"Yeah..." Tubbo said. "No. I'm going inside to wash up for lunch." He stood up, stretched, and started towards the house.

"But Tubbo!" Tommy protested, following him.

Techno locked eyes with Wilbur over the fire. "So, your plan went well," Techno commented idly.

"*You, shut up,*" Wilbur hissed before turning to walk away, leaving Techno to put out the fire alone.

#### Chapter End Notes



[from Imgflip Meme Generator](#)

Also, if you are reading this within a week of this publishing, I invite you to vote in a most [decisive poll](#).

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!